

## GREYGUARD (PALADIN VARIANT)

*“You should know, I take no pleasure in this. But often, the letter of the law must be written in blood.” - Greyguard Romero Maravaldi, torturer*

The greyguard are devoted knights in service of Votan, The Black Warrior, paragons of self-discipline and honor. Votan represents total adherence to duty, humbleness, and laws of man. The greyguard believe evil or good are immaterial, that law and order give purpose and meaning to everything. Without regimentation and strict definition, there would be no purpose in the cosmos. Therefore, whether a law is good or evil is of no import as long as it brings order and meaning. The benefits of organization and regimentation outweigh any moral questions raised by their actions.

In their day-to-day affairs, greyguards will adhere to the laws of the area they are in, and will also maintain their own sense of honor in conjunction with their tenets of faith.

**Code of Conduct:** A greyguard must be of lawful neutral alignment and loses all class features except proficiencies if she ever willingly commits a chaotic act. Additionally, a greyguard's code requires that she respect legitimate authority, act with honor (not breaking oaths, not fighting dirty, report illegal actions to the authorities, etc.), help those in need (provided if such actions advances law and order), and punish those who break the laws and threaten authority figures of their community and nation.

**Greyguards vs Paladins:** Paladins want laws to protect the weak and punish the wicked, while greyguards are only interested in maintaining or expanding laws to cover every foreseeable problem within society without compassion or moral judgment. Where paladins will question the utility of laws that do not take into account all circumstances to provide a just and equitable settlement that coincides with their moral beliefs, greyguards do not consider morality when applying laws, only the effectiveness of the law to keep society stable.

**Associates:** While she may adventure with good, evil, or neutral allies, a paladin avoids working with criminals or with anyone who consistently offends her moral code. Under exceptional circumstances, a paladin can ally with criminal associates, but only to defeat what she believes to be a greater threat to order and the stability of society. A greyguard should seek an atonement spell periodically during such an unusual alliance, and should end the alliance immediately should she feel it is doing more harm than good. A greyguard may accept only henchmen, followers, or cohorts who are lawful.

**Ex-Greyguards:** A greyguard who ceases to be lawful neutral, who willfully commits a chaotic act, or who violates the code of conduct loses all greyguard spells and class features (including the service of the greyguard's black mount, but not weapon, armor, and shield proficiencies). She may not progress any further in levels as a greyguard. She regains her abilities and advancement potential if she atones for her violations, as appropriate.



**Class Skills:** Greyguards add Knowledge (Local) and Intimidate to their class skills.

**Diehard (Ex):** A greyguard gains Diehard as a bonus feat at 1st level, even if she doesn't meet the prerequisites. This ability replaces her Heavy Armor Proficiency.

**Aura of Law (Ex):** The power of a greyguard's aura of law (see the *detect* law spell) is equal to her greyguard level.

**Absolute Authority (Su):** Greyguards serve a religious or legal code and has absolute authority (granted by a higher-ranking agent of that code) to enforce it. This means that if the greyguard catches criminals, she may judge them guilty (given sufficient proof) and order their execution, or do it herself if need be. Because the greyguard must act within the law, there is rarely any friction between her and established authorities other than disputes about jurisdiction and challenges from other forms of authority. A greyguard may deputize others to aid her in her tasks, although she is responsible for their actions in her name.



*A greyguard's black mount*

As part of a Diplomacy and Intimidate check regarding matters of the law and her authority, a greyguard may exert her authority to grant herself a +4 bonus on these checks. This ability negates any need to carry a badge or writ of office, and is mainly used to convince those unfamiliar with the greyguard of her legal powers. For example, a greyguard can use this ability to check an angry mob intent on lynching a jailed prisoner, or convince a stubborn mayor that interfering with the greyguard's efforts is likely to anger the lord they both work for. Even against individuals who don't acknowledge his code of laws (such as thieves or warriors from other lands), the greyguard's fervor still grants these skill bonuses. She does not, however, gain these bonuses in situations where her code of laws would not apply or hold no bearing (like against monsters or savages). The DM ultimately adjudicates who the greyguard's authority applies against.

In addition, a greyguard's knowledge of her code is magically flawless, as if she were mentally reviewing a perfect copy of the code. If the source of the code changes (such as a decree from the church's high priest or a new law created by a king), she instantly knows it. This perfect knowledge means she immediately recognizes any misquoting of the law (deliberate or accidental), and many greyguards consider it their duty to review the law book in remote settlements to make sure there are no errors in transcription or translation. A greyguard may always take 10 on Knowledge checks regarding the code, even when rushed or threatened. This replaces detect evil.

**Ruin (Su):** Once per day per greyguard level, a greyguard can infuse their weapon with destructive power. As a swift action, she treats her melee attacks until the beginning of her next turn (whether armed or unarmed) as magical and lawful, including ignoring hardness up to twice her greyguard level, with a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls, as well as on combat maneuver checks and CMD. This bonus increases by +1 at 5th level and every 5 levels thereafter. This ability replaces smite evil.

**Shadowshield (Su):** At 2nd level, a greyguard can surround himself with his own shadow. She gains a +1 shield bonus to AC and DR/adamantine equal to 1/2 her greyguard level. The shield bonus increases by +1 at 6th level, and every four levels thereafter, to a maximum of +5 at 18th level. These benefits are halved when in bright light (i.e. direct sunshine and inside the area of a daylight spell). This ability replaces divine grace.

**Undying(Ex):** At 3rd level, a greyguard's vitals begin to atrophy, as her body is blessed by Votan. She adds her greyguard level on checks to stabilize at negative hit points and gains a 25% chance to ignore a critical hit or precision damage. This does not stack with fortification armor or similar effects.

At 9th level, this chance increases to 50% and she becomes immune to petrification.

At 15th level, this chance increases to 75% and she becomes immune to bleed and blood drain effects.

This ability replaces divine health and her mercies gained at 3rd, 9th, and 15th level.

**Darkvision (Ex):** At 4<sup>th</sup> level, a greyguard gains darkvision 30 feet. If the greyguard already has darkvision, the range increases by 30 feet. This ability replaces channel positive energy.

**Divine Bond (Sp):** Upon reaching 5<sup>th</sup> level, a greyguard must form a bond with a special mount known as a black mount, the holy symbol of Votan. A black mount functions like a normal mount with the following changes: it has a matte black body and head with sharp, silvery eyes, no mouth, and smoke-colored, insubstantial hooves that make little sound. It has no saddle, bridle, or bit, but it is exceptionally alert to the nudges and balance changes of its rider. The black mount can project its feelings similar to the empathy ability of an intelligent weapon.

At 11th level, the black mount gains the resolute creature simple template and becomes an undead creature for the purposes of determining which spells affect it.

At 15th level, a greyguard's black mount can cast *shadow walk* on itself and its rider once per day, caster level equal to the greyguard's level.

**Votan's Blessing (Su):** At 11th level, a greyguard can expend a use of her ruin ability as a swift action to grant herself and all allies within 10 feet the Power Attack, Improved Sunder, and Greater Sunder feats, even if they lack the prerequisites. The effects last for 1 minute. Chaotic creatures gain no benefit from this ability. This ability replaces aura of justice.

**Greater Ruin (Su):** At 14th level, whenever a greyguard uses their ruin ability, their weapon is treated as having the *axiomatic* and *wounding* special abilities. This ability replaces aura of faith.

**Unwearied(Ex):** At 17th level, a greyguard gains immunity to fatigue and exhaustion. This replaces aura of righteousness.

**Deathless Body (Ex):** At 20th level, a greyguard's body finishes its transformation into an undying servant of Votan. She no longer needs to eat, drink, breathe, or sleep, and she becomes immune to paralysis, poison, and stunning. She is also no longer subject to critical hits or precision-based damage. This ability replaces holy champion.